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Hugoton Residents Pull Together To Help A Friend

Some Hugoton residents are coming together this weekend to help a friend battling Crohn's disease.

Bill DeCamp looks at a picture of his friend Jeff Whitham who's been affectionately given the nickname "brother love."

"Good Christian man, very honest person," said DeCamp.

"That's why we call him brother love, because he just loves life," said friend Wayne Harrison.

Unfortunately, Whitham's life has been hard. He's battling Crohn's disease, which affects his gastrointestinal tract and makes it very hard to digest food. He and his wife Kim were actually in Wichita Tuesday getting treatment, which can be quite costly.

"The shots that he takes are \$5,000 a shot, and she said, 'Donice I got \$15,000 sitting in my fridge -- I mean in three medications,' and that's just outstanding, I mean that's just unbelievable," said friend Donice Medina.

It's a lot of money for Whitham's family since he's unable to work. So, three of his friends have decided to help out by throwing a benefit in his honor this Saturday.

"Bill and I were talking about it one day and I said, 'you know we really need to do something,' and he said, 'well, I've got a group and we could put some music together,' and I said, 'well, if you can put the music together, I'll get the food and we had a little meeting,'" Donice said.

The event will feature Christian music, a pig roast and an auction with items ranging from jackets to cakes and pies. While the benefit is free, Whitham's friends hope donations will be given. All proceeds will help pay for his medical expenses.

"Whatever we're doing, he'll do the same for anybody in town whether he knew them or not," said friend Harrison. "If there's a need, Jeff would be there."

The benefit is this Saturday at 6 p.m. at Hugoton Elementary School. Monetary donations can also be sent to Citizen's Bank in Hugoton.

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